
Title: The Wraith - Vol. V

Author: Anaq

The scene unfolding
before me was nothing
like what I expected a
wraith encounter to be
like. It was... peaceful.
The fires of my rage, my
desire for revenge, were
all but extinguished.
Instead, I felt the cold
creeping up inside my
body, taking every inch of
me. My breath was slow
and shallow and I could no
longer feel my heart
beating in my neck. I
wondered if it was
beating at all. What
drove me no longer did,
but now I had no reason
to go on. I could no
longer feel my legs, my
hands gripping my sword,
or anything else for that
matter. I just felt the
ice. Ice in my veins, ice
in my heart. I caught one
final glimpse of the
wraith, draining the life
from another patch of
berries, before my hand
slipped from the hilt and
I felt the snow envelop
me. What followed was a
haze. I could feel myself
moving, snow rushing over
my shoulders, down my
back and into the
crevices of my boots. I
was being dragged. My
eyelids were heavy and
frozen shut, but I could
see light flickering beyond
them.

Then, darkness.

I was no longer being
dragged through snow, I

was on a much rougher surface. I tore my eyes open and cast a look around. I found myself in yet another cave, now propped up against the wall, just as my companion had been. The navigator crouch over me, grinning. He reached beneath his shredded fur cloak — it was slung over his shoulders haphazardly, its proper form destroyed by large gashes all across it — and pulled out a handful of berries. He pushed them towards me. I took them without a thought, without even a thank you.

“I thought you were dead” I croaked, after scoffing down the sweet berries.

“I thought you were dead” The navigator replied, nodding to the tracks that lay outside the cave; the marks of my body that he’d dragged through the glistening snow.

“I slew the monster”.

“What?”

“The beast was just there, looking at a bush. It didn’t even notice me sneak up. I took your sword and cut it in half. The stories are true, you know? One swing was all it took.”

When would I stop feeling it? This all-consuming guilt. Sadness overcame me, the mourning feelings I should have had for my Father, instead of the unbridled anger. The anger that had cost too many too much. The navigator

could see the look on my
face, the look of regret,
sorrow and devastation,
not the joy and
retribution he'd been
seeking. I didn't feel
anything I thought I'd
feel. I just felt more
pain.

Pain for another life lost
for no reason.